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Sixty-fourth session

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 14th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 22 October 2009, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Nasser. (Qatar)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 30: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (continued) (A/64/20)

1. **Mr. Walzer** (Israel) said that 2009 marked the forty-ninth anniversary of the first manned moon landing, and one could only marvel at the progress achieved since Sputnik had first orbited the Earth over a half century before. However, progress was hard to achieve alone, and international cooperation in the area of space technology was essential, as joining forces assured substantive advances and technological breakthroughs.

2. Israel had officially entered the space age with the launch of the Ofeq-1 satellite in September 1988 and had continued to place emphasis on using its technological edge in small, sophisticated satellites, space propulsion, and satellite-based technologies, such as remote sensing. In the past year, the Israeli space industry had consolidated its links with foreign partners and endeavoured to advance a number of projects to benefit the international community as a whole. The joint Franco-Israeli Vegetation and Environment Monitoring New Micro-Satellite (VENUS) cooperative project, would, inter alia, develop an observation micro-satellite, in which multispectral cameras would provide accurate data for monitoring, analysis and modelling of land surface functioning under the influence of environmental factors and human activities. In what was known as precision-farming, the VENUS project would optimize agriculture and aquaculture and would have global ecological applications.

3. He drew attention to the special partnership with the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), including the STS-107 Columbia project and the related Mediterranean-Israel Dust Experiment, in which an Israeli astronaut had studied atmospheric aerosols and the influence of global changes on the climate, as well as helping to coordinate a spectrometer test and spectroradiometer instruments. Although the mission had ended in tragedy, Israel continued to support its partnership with NASA for the betterment of humankind. Another cooperative project was the project to launch an Israeli space telescope on an Indian GEO satellite in 2010, through collaboration between Tel Aviv University and the Indian Institute of Astrophysics. Israel had signed cooperation agreements with several countries and

hoped to sign others. It was also currently negotiating a framework agreement for joining the European Space Agency (ESA).

4. The Israeli private sector contributed considerably to the space industry, with over 10 companies producing space products, while many private companies explored technologies for alleviating some of humankind's pressing environmental needs. Israel wished to expand its space cooperation and share its knowledge and expertise with other States and, by so doing, to provide space access to those without independent capacity. His delegation invited scientists, especially from neighbouring countries, to utilize the country's observatory, which was open to all nations. Israel could and should be a platform for bringing States together and enhancing cooperation for the benefit of all. It therefore endorsed the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) to use space-related technologies for improving the quality of life on Earth.

5. **Mr. González** (Chile), commending the efforts of Mr. Arévalo Yepes, who was spending his last General Assembly as Chairman of COPUOS, said that he wished to highlight two forthcoming space-related conferences: the Sixth Space Conference of the Americas, scheduled for Mexico in November 2010, and the Diplomatic Conference, to be held in Chile in July 2010.

6. While he appreciated the work of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, he recommended that it should update its document in so far as it concerned the impact of space technologies on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Also, The Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) should be consolidated in a UNISPACE IV, which Chile would like to help organize with the assistance of the regional offices of international organizations, because the link between space technology and the MDGs was crucial. Many years had elapsed since UNISPACE III, which appeared to have been a turning point on relevant issues.

7. The action groups created had produced specific results regarding the developing countries' needs, and the Conference had signalled a move from rhetoric to action, from thinking to commitment, both of them sought by developing countries. But the world had changed enormously since then and the new globalized

world called for further strengthening of capacities. Although Chile was on schedule to meet its MDG targets, it needed the additional strength that space technology provided in order to continue its development efforts in that regard. It was also necessary to strengthen COPUOS, which should also move, once and for all, from words to action.

8. It was vital that the 2010 meetings should hold a serious discussion of the impact of space technology on the MDGs. The 2009 round tables had been marked by the inexplicable — and unexplained — absence of the World Health Organization (WHO), the key agency when it came to the benefits of space technology for health, which had been a great disappointment for his delegation. Panels needed to address the global agenda, for international stability was linked to global public goods. All too often in the United Nations, high-level seminars ended with no tangible conclusion, and were promptly forgotten when delegates returned home.

9. Something similar had occurred in Cartagena de Indias and Ecuador, where, despite the sterling work of the Colombian and Ecuadorian Governments, the collaboration of the United Nations organizations had been exceedingly poor. They were not being asked for favours; they were, after all, the employees of the Member States. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), at the initiative of Argentina, had created a satellite group on outer space which worked well and should be replicated by other international organizations. He requested the Office to update its document in so far as effect of space technologies was concerned.

10. Chile was firmly committed to regional cooperation, especially with regard to the need for greater cooperation in space. He was therefore disappointed by the outright rejection of draft resolution (A/C.4/64/L.4) on the peaceful uses of outer space, which had been submitted jointly by the delegations of Chile and Mexico. He urged all delegations to examine — not only out of mere curiosity, but also out of diplomatic duty — both the preambular and operative paragraphs of that draft resolution and to decide whether it should have been at least discussed in the spirit of solidarity that had emerged from the Space Conference of the Americas.

11. **Mr. Al Habib** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his country, an early member of COPUOS, had constantly supported its work in upholding the

fundamental principles of space activities, which stipulated that outer space was the province of all humankind and that all its benefits should be extended to all nations without discrimination. He reiterated his delegation's grave concern at the likelihood of an arms race in outer space, a possibility that called for increased international awareness and preventive efforts.

12. Convinced that space activities and applications played an essential role in the sustainable development of a conscious nation, his Government had worked hard to develop its space programmes, launching its first locally produced satellite launch vehicle (SLV) in 2008, followed months later by the launching of its second sub-orbital rocket. In 2009, its second SLV — produced, from design to launch, by Iranians — had been successfully placed in low Earth orbit (LEO), while a site for further launchings had been established and several student satellite projects had been undertaken under development programmes on space technology.

13. Aware of the importance of international cooperation in space-related activities — especially within the framework of COPUOS — for obtaining optimal benefit from space applications, his country had focused in recent years on holding regional workshops. With the cooperation of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, several workshops and symposiums on space law, the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) and space science and technology had been organized.

14. UN-SPIDER activities for the region had been extensively discussed in a workshop organized by the Iranian Space Agency and held in Tehran in 2008, to be followed by another in November 2009. Asian countries' vulnerability to disasters necessitated implementation of that Platform in the region, given that 91 per cent of all deaths from natural disasters in the past 100 years had occurred in Asia. With that in mind, his country had fully supported the programme since its initiation and had in 2008 expressed its readiness to host its Regional Support Office, for which the cooperation agreement had been signed on 4 June, upon finalization of the discussions between the Iranian authorities and the Office for Outer Space Activities. A network of regional support offices in Asia could provide effective coordination for promoting UN-SPIDER, maximizing its advantages to

all nations in the region for relief operations and protection of life and property from natural disasters.

15. Notwithstanding the substantial contribution of satellite products to human well-being and to all countries' socio-economic development, it was a matter of grave concern that misuse and irresponsible distribution of satellite imaging through the World Wide Web breached individuals' privacy rights, inflicted irreparable damage on human societies and jeopardized the national security of States. Given that such activities disturbed the serenity of all States and societies, an appropriate collective response was required from the international community. Regulation and dissemination of satellite imagery through the World Wide Web had merit and relevance, but must be adequately addressed by related international organizations and the United Nations, particularly COPUOS. Outer space, although a common asset, had great double-edged potential: for good or for evil.

16. **Mr. Ng Chin Huat** (Malaysia) said that his country's second Earth observation satellite, RazakSAT, had been successfully launched on 14 July with assistance from the United States Government and had become the first Earth observation satellite at the near equatorial orbit (NEqO). Using that new facility, Malaysia would pursue its efforts to strengthen international cooperation in disaster management and was willing to share its remote-sensing satellite data with any countries along the Earth's equatorial belt region wishing to use them. That was Malaysia's contribution in support of UN-SPIDER initiatives for helping the world to provide early warning against natural disasters and so reduce loss of life.

17. Malaysia had also supported the celebration of International Heliophysical Year in 2007 and, continuing its commitment, was supporting the International Year of Astronomy 2009. One activity of which his country was proud was magnetic field measurement using the MAGDAS magnetometer located at the Langkawi National Observatory, data from which was channelled to Japanese-led research on global magnetic fields. Malaysia was also collaborating with the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) in a protein studies experiment on board the Japanese KIBO Module at the International Space Station (ISS), which should have an impact on the oleochemical industry. Malaysia had also joined others in celebrating International Year of Astronomy 2009, striking a

commemorative coin and organizing education and awareness-raising activities for the general public.

18. **Mr. Kafando** (Burkina Faso) said, that as a member of COPUOS, his delegation supported its activities to prevent militarization and pollution of space, and the regulation of all space activities. Burkina Faso had neither interstellar ambitions nor any desire for outer space adventure, being concerned only with the numerous and very visible areas in which space research and technology could be of service to development: telecommunications, health, education, disaster management and meteorological forecasting, confirming the importance of outer space as an instrument for social and economic development and for strengthening communication and information media.

19. Unfortunately, even today the developing countries lagged behind, and the transfer of space technologies to those countries was still not a reality, thus exposing them to natural disasters and to the perverse but avertable effects of climate change. Like many other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Burkina Faso had suffered from major flooding as a direct consequence of climate change, thus underscoring the need for ongoing evaluation and strengthening of disaster-prevention and -management capacities. The developing countries were not only the most vulnerable to climate change, but also paid the heaviest toll when disasters struck, but Africa had taken up the challenge. The important conclusions and recommendations of the Seventh World Forum of Sustainable Development, with climate change at its centre, which had just ended in Burkina Faso, should be of use in the lead-up to the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 15).

20. The COP 15 discussions were a reminder of the imperative need for UN-SPIDER to be made operational, and to allow all countries — especially developing countries — to have access to space services. The international community must step up cooperation for the peaceful uses of outer space and continue to support the work of COPUOS and its subcommittees and the Office for Outer Space Affairs. All humankind could benefit from that cooperation; it was time for the international community to react and meet new challenges.

21. **Mr. Hodgkins** (United States of America) recalled that it was on the fortieth anniversary of perhaps the most significant technological achievement of the era, the lunar landing of Apollo 11, which had provided the first pictures of Earth seen from space. Much attention now was properly focused on the application of space techniques to solving terrestrial problems, but exploration remained an enticing goal, and the United States of America and its partners in the International Space Station programme, and now the NASA Global Exploration Strategy, had built on that legacy.

22. It was also the tenth anniversary of UNISPACE III, the last major United Nations conference of the twentieth century and an organizational and substantive success. The inclusiveness of the Conference, the breadth and emphasis of the issues it had considered had made it highly relevant to both developed and developing countries, and five years later, both governmental and non-governmental bodies had been able to participate in the follow-up while preserving the pivotal role of Member States.

23. COPUOS, as the only standing body of the United Nations concerned with that issue, was a forum for promoting cooperative achievement and sharing of benefits from space exploration. Its Legal Subcommittee had played a key role in the drafting of the primary United Nations treaties on outer space, the framework within which space exploration by nations, international organizations and, now, private entities had flourished. As a result, space technology and services contributed immeasurably to economic growth and an improved quality of life around the world. Yet, notwithstanding their continued relevance, many States had not accepted key treaties, including some members of COPUOS, and his delegation encouraged them to ratify and implement at least the four main treaties. The Legal Subcommittee's consideration of a new item on the national mechanisms relating to space debris mitigation measures complemented the important work already done by COPUOS in that area. In the course of its work on national legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, it had gathered useful information on how States oversaw their space activities, and its consideration of capacity-building in space law had been equally encouraging.

24. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had also made significant progress on a wide variety of topics. In particular, it had reached consensus on the

Safety Framework for Nuclear Power Source Applications in Outer Space, subsequently approved by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG), which had reported to the Subcommittee on its work, continued to advance compatibility and interoperability among the global and regional space-based systems and the integration of global navigation satellite systems into national infrastructure, particularly in developing countries. The collision between two satellites earlier in the year had generated debris in the low-Earth orbit and had served as an important reminder of the need to ensure a safe space environment. The United States of America had expanded the number of satellites it monitored for risk of collision with other satellites and space debris. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee's new multi-year item on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities would increase awareness of current and future challenges facing governmental and non-governmental space operations, and should result in guidelines for best practices.

25. **Mr. Kalinin** (Russian Federation) said that his country favoured the expansion of dialogue to promote international cooperation for the exploration and peaceful use of outer space and welcomed the increasing interest of other countries in that regard. Outer space technology, such as UN-SPIDER, was an invaluable asset in tackling the problems facing humanity.

26. While he noted that progress had been made in the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III, he believed that further steps still needed to be taken in that area. He commended COPUOS for its productive fifty-second session and welcomed its decision to include two new items on the agenda of the forty-seventh session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, entitled "International Space Weather Initiative" and "Long-term sustainability of outer space activities".

27. As one of the leading countries involved in the peaceful uses of outer space, the Russian Federation was proud of its achievements. For example, it had provided launch services for 40 per cent of all launch vehicles worldwide in 2008. His country also attached a high priority to the implementation of manned space flight programmes and remained committed to its obligations to ensure the successful operation of the International Space Station, where an increasing

number of scientific experiments were being carried out.

28. COPUOS should continue to play a central role in coordinating international cooperation for the exploration and use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes. In that connection, his delegation supported the further enhancement of its capabilities to elaborate the political and legal foundations for space activities. Outer space must be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. One of the most important tasks before the international community therefore remained the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including through harnessing the full capacity of the United Nations to prevent the militarization of outer space. To that end, the Russian Federation and China had drawn up a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and the threat of or use of force against outer space objects.

29. The discussions held within COPUOS had clearly demonstrated that a number of gaps remained to be filled in terms of the implementation and regulation of space law. In that respect, he reiterated his delegation's proposal for a substantive discussion to be held on the elaboration of a comprehensive United Nations convention on international space law.

30. **Ms. Fogarty** (Australia) observed that the use of satellites in dealing especially with the health impact of climate change was vitally important. Australia's Integrated Marine Observatory System combined in situ and satellite data to model the role of oceans in climate change in the coastal marine environment, a matter of crucial interest to all Pacific countries. A number of reception stations in Australia for satellite remote-sensing data under the System provided access for coastal, ocean and climate applications. The Government was also working to set up the Great Barrier Reef Ocean Observing System, which likewise combined surface and satellite monitors to document variability in the Western Coral Sea.

31. Working with NASA and the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Australia also maintained a Web-based remote-sensing atlas that gave researchers access to ocean-related data — like sea surface temperature — that provided a daily snapshot of a particular circumscribed region.

32. Geoscience Australia, her country's principal Earth resources satellite ground station and data-processing facility, was also working on a range of

satellite applications relating to disaster management, environmental monitoring and aquatic remote sensing. One project, for instance, was examining tsunami risk in the South-West Pacific Ocean, using multispectral satellite data to produce detailed bathymetric maps for the coasts of Tonga and the Solomon Islands. The use of a physics-based remote-sensing technique enabled water depth in such shallow coastal areas to be estimated without the need for extensive field work and at a much lower cost than other surveying methods, and also offered advantages over empirical, image-based remote-sensing bathymetry techniques. Another important research project under way relying in part on satellite data was the South-West Pacific Ocean circulation and climate experiment, bringing together scientists from Australia, Fiji, New Caledonia, New Zealand, France, Hawaii and elsewhere in the United States of America.

33. There were, of course, many other ways — such as telemedicine — in which it was becoming essential to use space systems for everyday services. In Australia, using space-based technology to deliver benefits to remote communities was of particular benefit; and no doubt a similar problem was faced by developing countries. In view of its growing dependence on space systems, Australia was working on a national space policy governing their use and devising strategies for using space to meet national priorities and provide the needed space-related education and innovation. Science and research related to space were also important elements of Australia's wider scientific effort. In developing its national space policy, Australia would consider how to advance its international and regional space cooperation and engagement, and how to enhance its domestic capabilities. In the use of Earth-observation data to support activities centred on sustainability and climate change issues, it was important that timely access to remote-sensing data and derived information be provided free of charge or at a reasonable cost; and that capacity be built collaboratively.

34. **Ms. Ihenacho** (Nigeria) said that her delegation welcomed the growing interest in the demilitarization of outer space, which was the common heritage of humanity. The five United Nations treaties on outer space had no doubt contributed immensely to that goal, although the last of them, the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies had, regrettably, not been ratified.

Emphasis should be put on: preventing the testing, deployment and use of weapons of mass destruction, especially in orbit around the Earth and celestial bodies other than the Moon and in outer space; protecting objects in outer space from the use, or the threat of use, of force from Earth; and universal accession to the outer space treaties.

35. The African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Nigeria, which had been recognized as very effective in educating and empowering the people of the country in space science affairs, should be provided with more space law experts who could boost its curriculum.

36. Nigeria would be launching its second Earth-observation satellite in 2010, a high-resolution spacecraft expected to improve the resource mapping of Nigeria and of Africa as a whole, which would also give Nigeria greater input into the work of the Disaster Monitoring Constellation, comprising spacecraft from the United Kingdom, Nigeria, China, Turkey, Algeria and Spain. The NigeriaSat-II would be launched, together with a flight standard training model built by Nigerian engineers and scientists, to demonstrate her country's capabilities in building future satellites.

37. **Mr. Kharytynskyi (Ukraine)** said that the recommendations of UNISPACE III relating to the use of space-based systems in the areas of agriculture, land use, water resource management and disaster management had done much to advance sustainable development, and space-based observations were useful in the efforts to address climate change. The spin-offs of space technology were, furthermore, a powerful engine for technological innovation and growth in both the industrial and service sectors and could usefully be applied to achieve social and humanitarian objectives or to develop national communications infrastructure. Ukraine believed that the convening of a fourth United Nations conference on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space should be discussed, and that the valuable United Nations Programme on Space Applications should, in view of the limited financial resources available, be supported through voluntary contributions.

38. Ukraine's own national space programme for the period 2008-2012 had begun to use Earth observations and space data actively in environmental protection, rescue operations in emergency situations and agricultural production. The programme also envisaged

the launching of a national satellite telecommunications system.

39. Peace should be maintained in outer space, through greater transparency in space activities, information-sharing and compliance with international space law, while uncontrolled proliferation of rocket and missile technologies should be opposed. The European Union draft Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities would guarantee access to space for all for peaceful purposes, preserve the security and integrity of space objects in orbit and give due consideration to the legitimate defence interests of States.

40. The use of satellites in medium-Earth orbit had to be further explored under the International Satellite System for Search and Rescue (COSPAS-SARSAT). Also, it was important to provide non-discriminatory, timely access to remote-sensing data at reasonable cost, and States should share experiences and technologies in collaborative projects. The concept of data democracy was vital in building the capacities of States.

41. His country continued to carry out research on the problem of space debris, and the use, organization and design of its own space launch vehicles complied with the recommendations of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC). The recent collision of two satellites in low-Earth orbit demonstrated the increasing risk posed by space debris. There had been a proposal to establish an international data platform on objects in outer space, and certainly information on the existing objects in outer space had to be made available to protect those in operation and to protect people from the re-entry of space debris. The safety, security and predictability of space activities would be further enhanced by codifying best practices and technical norms.

42. His Government welcomed the adoption of the IAEA-endorsed Safety Framework for Nuclear Power Source Applications in Outer Space. The exploitation of the geostationary orbit should be rationalized and all States should have access to it, regardless of their current technical capabilities. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of COPUOS should continue to discuss the matter.

43. More States and organizations should accede to the United Nations treaties on outer space; and the legal provisions themselves should be improved to

respond to contemporary problems. A new, comprehensive convention on space law, that would in no way undermine the existing space law regime, should be drafted to regulate all aspects of the constantly growing number of space activities. The sharing of information on national legislation could help identify common principles and procedures, facilitating consensus on how international space law should be developed. The work of international organizations also contributed significantly to the development of space law. The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs had developed a curriculum on space law to be taught by the regional centres for space science and technology education, which had to be furnished with adequate expertise and resources.

Agenda item 29: Effects of atomic radiation

(continued) (A/C.4/64/L.8)

Draft resolution A/C.4/64/L.8 on the effects of atomic radiation (continued)

44. **Mr. Bowman** (Canada), informing the Committee that the sponsors had been joined by Argentina, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, India, Lithuania and Pakistan, pointed out that there was a typographical error in paragraph 14 that should be corrected: the word "full" should be deleted before the word "membership". Also, since that same paragraph called for a decision by the end of the current session, the agenda item should be left open until that time.

45. **The Chairman**, noting that the draft resolution had no budget implications, said he took it that the Committee, in view of the consensus on the text before it, wished to suspend the 24-hour rule regarding adoption of draft resolutions.

46. *It was so decided.*

47. **Mr. Rodríguez** (Peru), speaking in explanation of position before action was taken on the draft resolution, said that while it was time to reconsider the composition of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, the addition of new members should not work to the detriment of currently active members; and until the financial constraints were resolved, paragraphs 13 and 14 could be taken to refer only to the incorporation of new members when a current member decided voluntarily to resign. The criteria for membership had to be developed through a calm and constructive

dialogue and should reflect the Organization's diversity as to the stages of development of Member States and their geographical location. With those understandings, Peru would join the consensus.

48. *Draft resolution A/C.4/64/L.8, as orally revised, was adopted.*

49. **Ms. Pessoa** (Brazil), speaking in explanation of position after the adoption of the draft resolution, said it was her delegation's understanding that the criteria for membership referred to in paragraph 13 must be based on the ability of Member States to contribute actively to the Scientific Committee's work and on equitable geographical representation — a principal operative in the previous enlargement of membership — while securing the participation of scientists from developing countries. It was also its understanding that the General Assembly would not be taking a decision on whether or not the membership would include current observer countries and that the decision would by no means be a re-examination of the entire membership of the Committee.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.



General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 15th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 23 October 2009, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar)

Contents

Agenda item 33: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 33: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (A/64/359-S/2009/470, A/64/494)

1. **Mr. Le Roy** (Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations) said during the past year he had visited most of the 17 peacekeeping missions and their host Governments, as well as regional partners, and, both at Headquarters and in the capitals of troop and police-contributing countries, had discussed the challenges and opportunities facing peacekeeping. Peacekeeping was an increasingly complex and dangerous undertaking; it was also a shared endeavour, resting on the partnership of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat.

2. Reviewing key developments during 2009, he said that more traditional missions with clear tasks, such as those in Cyprus and the Golan Heights, were continuing to contribute to peace and security and provide stability; they were cost-effective, but often witnessed little political progress.

3. Large, complex missions faced major, wide-ranging problems. In the Sudan, the implementation of the comprehensive peace agreement was threatened by delays in the preparation of the referendum and in the elections and inter-tribal violence in the south. In Darfur, the need for a political solution was critical; displaced civilians remained vulnerable and troop and equipment capacities still lagged behind the provisions of the mandate. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo there were new opportunities to address the presence of armed groups, both foreign and Congolese. A number of serious challenges remained, including the protection of civilians, but the re-establishment of State authority in the east could help in building a credible army and police.

4. Other, more mature missions needed to consolidate gains made in security and advance the peacebuilding effort on the ground. To that end, training of the national police and military was being supported by the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Although reintegration of former combatants had been completed, much remained to be done to strengthen the national security sector, promote good governance and foster economic recovery. The 2011 elections would be a critical test of the stability achieved thus far; current troop levels would be

maintained to ensure adequate security. The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) provided critical security support while assisting national efforts to strengthen the rule of law and foster economic development. Haiti's recovery and governance agenda enjoyed significant international support, not least through the efforts of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Haiti; that momentum must be maintained. In Côte d'Ivoire, preparations for the November presidential elections were going well, although the limited capacity of national institutions and, in some instances, a lack of political will had resulted in serious delays. The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) played a key role in helping national institutions overcome their limitations.

5. Each situation had its own complexity, but there were also common denominators. For a peacekeeping operation to succeed, it must be accompanied by a comprehensive political process supported by all stakeholders, for the duration of the mission. Peacekeeping personnel, who worked hard, in extremely difficult environments, to win the trust of local stakeholders, and deliver on wide-ranging mandates, deserved praise for their dedication. There was a need for clear and achievable mandates; the Security Council must set clearer priorities, and expectations needed to be scaled against the realities on the ground. Peacekeeping personnel needed support and resources to meet the challenge of protecting civilians in volatile environments. The gap between mandates and resources hampered rapid and robust reaction and the deployment of capabilities, notably the provision of critical aviation assets for the largest missions. Missions were capable of assuming certain early peacebuilding tasks but those tasks must be better defined and there must be better planning with partners before such tasks can be entrusted to other actors in predictable and sufficiently well-resourced frameworks, while making sure that early gains were sustainable. Finally, the enormous logistical challenges involved in missions could not be underestimated; the Department of Field Support was developing a support strategy which included a stronger client orientation.

6. He was gratified by Member States' broad support for peacekeeping. Troop and police-contributing countries were ready to assist further but had expressed the desire to be better consulted in mission planning and policy development and wanted clear and

achievable mandates. Yet the strains on the system were real. Some contributors struggled to meet the equipment and mobility requirements; others sought greater clarity on the tasks required or improved training support; for others, reimbursement was seen as insufficient or simply came too slowly.

7. Four main priority areas had been identified as the basis for a new partnership agenda for peacekeeping. That agenda built on previous work while taking into account new challenges.

8. The first priority area was developing practical guidance on critical roles for modern United Nations peacekeeping. There was an urgent need to clarify policy and guidance for the protection of civilians, robust peacekeeping and the linkages between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. On the protection of civilians, there were real limits to what could be done in the midst of ongoing conflict and across vast territories. All partners must have a common and realistic understanding of what could be achieved that could guide mandates, capabilities and expectations. A dialogue on the protection of civilians would draw on an independent study that would be issued shortly, a draft concept paper prepared by the Department, and consultations with Member States. Peacekeeping operations were already doing much to mitigate harm to civilians. The United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) had all taken steps to enhance monitoring and patrolling among the local population and in camps.

9. Progress was being made in defining and developing policy for robust peacekeeping, always within the basic principles of United Nations peacekeeping and the Charter of the United Nations, including consent of the main parties and impartiality. At the operational and tactical level, robustness meant the willingness and capability to deter and confront attempts to undermine a mission's mandate. A three-day meeting of over 30 troop-contributing countries and Governments held in May 2009, together with senior officials from the United Nations and regional organizations and peacekeeping experts, had concluded that robust peacekeeping was a political issue, requiring strategic guidance; that greater consultation with contributors was necessary, both prior to and during deployment; that forces must be more mobile in

order to confront threats to missions, mandates or populations; that peacekeeping operations must be conducted in a flexible manner, with a coherent and accountable chain of command; that there must be a greater intelligence capacity; and that the delivery of robust logistics needed to be improved.

10. Guidance was being clarified and developed on critical early peacebuilding tasks in post-conflict situations. A strategy with clear benchmarks would be developed for efforts to establish the rule of law and to strengthen security institutions in a way that would ensure consistent, high-quality work across the missions. A framework for international police peacekeeping was being developed and the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards were being updated. Rapidly deployable justice and corrections experts deployed alongside police capacities were essential in providing assistance to national rule of law institutions from the outset of a mission. Proposals were being developed for the achievement of that objective while being consistent with the human resource management reform approved by the General Assembly.

11. The second priority area was building the capabilities needed to meet current challenges. While the base of troop contributors needed to be expanded, especially to ensure specialized capabilities, there was a need to agree on the baseline capabilities that were expected for each core component of a peacekeeping operation. Contributors would then train police and troops to those standards. The Department was engaged with the commanders in the field to define the priority components of a capability-driven approach to peacekeeping; generic task lists were being identified for different components of a peacekeeping operation; pilot projects would then be undertaken for the development of operational standards and associated training guidance in specialist military and police areas. Work had begun to review the functions, capacities and readiness requirements of formed police units and similar efforts could be considered for other areas such as engineering and field hospitals and for the standards required for staff officers. That approach would help better link the needs of contributing countries with ongoing bilateral and global capacity-building programmes.

12. The third priority area was putting in place stronger United Nations field support arrangements, which would improve the ability of missions and

contributing countries to deliver on the ground. A critical dimension was the development of a wider support framework, including the support strategy of the Department of Field Support.

13. The fourth priority area was ensuring more consultative and effective arrangements for the planning and oversight of missions. Stronger cooperation was needed between contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat throughout the mission planning and implementation cycle. Consultation and reporting were being strengthened in order to improve planning and oversight of missions. In October 2009 a directive had been issued to all staff at Headquarters and in the field to play an active role in systematically engaging contributors prior to mandate renewals or changes on the ground and include feedback in reports to Member States; brief the Member States concerned on the parameters of technical assessment missions and report on their findings; and develop mission-specific benchmarks for the assessment and monitoring of mission progress.

14. Issues of safety and security were of the highest concern. The Organization had the obligation to ensure that risks to staff were at acceptable levels. In the light of recent incidents, in which United Nations personnel had been directly targeted, work had begun to improve security threat and risk assessments and to move certain mission functions away from high-risk areas. Safety was a second area of concern; with a relatively low financial investment, a realistic occupational safety programme would be put in place over the next few years. He paid tribute to the 86 United Nations peacekeepers who had died to date in 2009 in the cause of peace.

15. **Ms. Malcorra** (Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Department of Field Support) said that the Department of Field Support had become an important feature in the institutional landscape, delivering support to 15 peacekeeping missions, 13 special political missions and one African Union-led mission, while administering about 22,000 international and local civilian staff, and managing combined annual budgets of over \$8 billion and annual procurement costs of almost \$2.7 billion. The Department was focused on the very specific mandate of getting the right staff on board, securing sufficient financing and providing the necessary equipment and logistical services to the field in the quickest time possible. The

business of mission support had become a large, complex global enterprise requiring a professional, systematic yet adaptable approach to the different operating environments and mandate demands and the various stages of a mission life cycle.

16. To give some examples of particularly challenging support requirements in the past year, there had been the tripartite negotiations needed to secure safe and steady passage of personnel and equipment to UNAMID; the redeployment, across a vast country and largely by air, of most of the military component of MONUC; the complex legal, operational and transitional arrangements needed to transfer authority from the European Union-led Military Force (EUFOR) in Chad; the logistical support for the recent elections in Afghanistan, amid a worsening security situation; and the unprecedented arrangements for United Nations logistical, food, medical and communications support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) under very poor security conditions. Mention should also be made of the significant resizing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the unexpected liquidation of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) or less volatile missions such as those in Haiti or Timor-Leste that required special support services.

17. The third priority area of the new partnership agenda for peacekeeping was the support strategy that would chart the work of the Department of Field Support over the next five years. The Department needed to develop a business model that was equal to the demands and that recognized the need to evolve from mission-centric support to a global, integrated delivery system. Among the key elements driving that approach were: the need to update the operating framework, balancing the demand for effective delivery and the obligation to comply with rules, regulations and internal procedures; the need to strike a balance between the risks of delay and those stemming from increased operational empowerment and decentralized authority; the need to augment the readiness capacities which allowed for an immediate response to any current or future field requirement; the need to maximize the safety and security of United Nations personnel while ensuring acceptable living and working conditions in field locations; the recognition that all missions went through a life cycle and that real results in a shorter timespan depended upon strategic investment at critical stages; the need to improve the

timeliness of deployments; and, lastly, the desire to exert a more productive, economical impact on operations in the field by relying more on local or regional procurement and learning a more environmentally sensitive "footprint".

18. The new support strategy would have a significant impact on how the Department of Field Support was organized, staffed and resourced. A report was being prepared which would outline the elements of the strategy in detail.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a. m.